

The Pritzker Architecture Prize

2020 Laureates
Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara
Ireland

Media Kit



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Media Release Announcing the 2020 Laureates

Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara Receive the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize

Chicago, IL (March 3, 2020) – Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara of Dublin, Ireland, have been selected as the 2020 Pritzker Prize Laureates, announced Tom Pritzker, Chairman of The Hyatt Foundation, which sponsors the award that is known internationally as architecture’s highest honor.

“Architecture could be described as one of the most complex and important cultural activities on the planet,” remarks Farrell. “To be an architect is an enormous privilege. To win this prize is a wonderful endorsement of our belief in architecture. Thank you for this great honor.”

As architects and educators since the 1970s, Farrell and McNamara create spaces that are at once respectful and new, honoring history while demonstrating a mastery of the urban environment and craft of construction. Balancing strength and delicacy, and upholding a reverence of site-specific contexts, their academic, civic and cultural institutions, as well as housing developments, result in modern and impactful works that never repeat or imitate, but are decidedly of their own architectural voice.

“For their integrity in their approach to both their buildings, as well as the way they conduct their practice, their belief in collaboration, their generosity towards their colleagues, especially as evidenced in such events as the 2018 Venice Biennale, their unceasing commitment to excellence in architecture, their responsible attitude toward the environment, their ability to be cosmopolitan while embracing the uniqueness of each place in which they work, for all these reasons and more, Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara are awarded the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize,” states the 2020 Jury Citation, in part.

“Within the ethos of a practice such as ours, we have so often struggled to find space for the implementation of such values as humanism, craft, generosity, and cultural connection with each place and context within which we work. It is therefore extremely gratifying that this recognition is bestowed upon us and our practice and upon the body of work we have managed to produce over a long number of years,” says McNamara. “It is also a wonderful recognition of the ambition and vision of the clients who commissioned us and enabled us to bring our buildings to fruition.”

Their native Ireland, an island replete with mountains and cliffs, informs their acute sensitivities to geography, changing climates and nature in each of their sites. Their buildings consistently remain purposefully rich, yet modest, enhancing cities and lending to sustainability while responding to local needs. University Campus UTEC Lima (Lima, Peru 2015) is located on a challenging site with a highway sunk in a ravine on one side and a residential neighborhood on the other. The result is a vertical and cascading building responding to both site and climatic needs. Its open spaces were designed to deliberately welcome cooling breezes of the ocean and minimize the need for air-conditioning. At the Offices for the Department of Finance (Dublin, Ireland 2009), the selection of local limestone used in thick panels grants strength to the building. Windows recessed or flush with the façade have grills below them to circulate fresh air throughout the building. Exposures on all sides of the building, atypical of the architecture in this city, offer panoramic views.

The architects are continuously conscious of the dialogue between the internal and external, evidenced by the mingling of public and private spaces, and the meaningful selection and integrity of materials. “What we try to do in our work is to be aware of the various levels of citizenship and try to find an architecture that deals with overlap, that heightens your relationship to one another,” illustrates Farrell. Università Luigi Bocconi (Milan, Italy 2008) fosters community between its occupants and the vibrant city that extends well beyond the vertical campus through its ground floor public space,

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Media Release (continued)

which continues indoors, and its floating canopy that overlaps the ground below, engaging passersby with students. Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, School of Economics (Toulouse, France 2019) features brick buttresses, ramps and courtyards, which are metaphors for the city filled with bridges, walls, promenades and stone towers. North King Street Housing (Dublin, Ireland 2000) is intentionally void of external design elements to resonate with the restraint of the neighboring warehouses.

“The collaboration between Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara represents a veritable interconnectedness between equal counterparts,” states Pritzker. “They demonstrate incredible strength in their architecture, show deep relation to the local situation in all regards, establish different responses to each commission while maintaining the honesty of their work, and exceed the requirements of the field through responsibility and community.”

Farrell and McNamara have mastered proportion to maintain a human scale and achieve intimate environments within tall and vast buildings. “They have tried, with considerable success, to help us all overcome what is likely to evermore become a serious human problem,” explains Justice Stephen Breyer, Jury Chair. “Namely, how do we build housing and workplaces in a world with over half of its population dwelling in urban environments, and many of them who cannot afford luxury?” A contoured theater floor at the Solstice Arts Centre (Navan, Ireland 2007) creates a physical nearness between audience members and performers. The generous placement of open spaces, windows, glass curtain walls and exposed ceilings allows natural light to filter through a passage of rooms, creating impressions of light through large and small spaces, and within the interlocking areas that compose Institut Mines Télécom in Palaiseau (Paris, France 2019).

McNamara states, “Architecture is a framework for human life. It anchors us and connects us to the world in a way which possibly no other space-making discipline can.” Farrell continues, “At the core of our practice is a real belief that architecture matters. It is a cultural spatial phenomenon that people invent.”

The pair established Grafton Architects in 1978 in Dublin, where they continue to practice and reside. In just over forty years, they have completed nearly as many projects, located in Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Peru.

Farrell and McNamara are the 47th and 48th Laureates of the Pritzker Prize, and the first two recipients from Ireland.

About the Pritzker Architecture Prize

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was founded in 1979 by the late Jay A. Pritzker and his wife, Cindy. Its purpose is to honor annually a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

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Jury Citation

Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara have practiced architecture together for forty years in a way that clearly reflects the objectives of the Pritzker Prize: to recognize the art of architecture and consistent service to humanity as evidenced through a body of built work.

Co-founding their professional practice, called Grafton Architects, in Dublin, Ireland in 1978, they have consistently and unhesitatingly pursued the highest quality of architecture for the specific location in which it was to be built, the functions it would house and especially for the people who would inhabit and use their buildings and spaces. They have an oeuvre that includes numerous educational buildings, housing and cultural and civic institutions. Pioneers in a field that has traditionally been and still is a male-dominated profession, they are also beacons to others as they forge their exemplary professional path.

Many of their buildings are located in their home country of Ireland, but through competitions, they have won major commissions for other places around the world, such as Italy, France and Peru. With a profound understanding of place gained through their research, keen powers of observation, open and ever curious explorations and deep respect for culture and context, Farrell and McNamara are able to make their buildings respond to a setting and city most appropriately, while still being fresh and modern. This deep understanding of “spirit of place” means that their works enhance and improve the local community. Their buildings are “good neighbors” that seek to make a contribution beyond the boundaries of the building and to make a city work better. Their North King Street Housing in Dublin (2000) is one example of this: it creates an inner courtyard and a welcome respite from the adjacent busy streets.

Their approach to architecture is always honest, revealing an understanding of the processes of design and construction from large scale structures to the smallest details. It is often in these details, especially in buildings with modest budgets, where a big impact can be felt. For example, the Urban Institute of Ireland (Dublin, 2002) employs what the architects call a “crafted skin” to create a visually interesting building through changes in materials responding to openings, folds, needs for shade and other concerns. At the same time, it employs common sense, good-practice environmental control methodologies for an efficient, sustainable building. On a particularly sensitive site in Dublin, the masterful Offices for the Department of Finance (2009) attests to their knowledge and care in the selection of materials and construction techniques with a carefully handcrafted bronze railing and gate and sanded limestone on the facades.

The architects are skilled and successful working at many scales—from large institutional buildings to a house of only a little more than 100 square meters. Without grand or frivolous gestures, they have managed to create buildings that are monumental institutional presences when appropriate, but even so they are zoned and detailed in such a way as to produce more intimate spaces that create community within. In their large buildings such as the University Campus UTEC (2015) in Lima, Peru or the School of Economics Building (2008) at Universita Luigi Bocconi, they have achieved a human scale through the composition of spaces and volumes of different sizes. The dialogues they create between buildings and surroundings demonstrate a new appreciation of both their works and place.

A constant in their approach, the architects have an understanding of how to design complex sections of buildings in such a way that views connect deep interior spaces with the larger exterior realm and allow natural light to penetrate and animate spaces deep inside a building. Often light streams from skylights or upper story windows throughout the interiors of their buildings, providing warmth and visual interest, helping the inhabitants easily orient themselves in the spaces, and providing the ever necessary connection to the exterior.

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Jury Citation (continued)

For their integrity in their approach to both their buildings, as well as the way they conduct their practice, their belief in collaboration, their generosity towards their colleagues, especially as evidenced in such events as the 2018 Venice Biennale, their unceasing commitment to excellence in architecture, their responsible attitude toward the environment, their ability to be cosmopolitan while embracing the uniqueness of each place in which they work, for all these reasons and more, Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara are awarded the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize.

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Jury Members

Stephen Breyer (Chair)

U.S. Supreme Court Justice
Washington, DC

André Aranha Corrêa do Lago

Architectural Critic, Curator and Brazilian Ambassador to India
Delhi, India

Barry Bergdoll

Architecture Historian, Educator, Curator and Author
New York, New York

Deborah Berke

Architect and Educator
New York, New York

Sejima Kazuyo

Architect and 2010 Pritzker Laureate
Tokyo, Japan

Benedetta Tagliabue

Architect and Educator
Barcelona, Spain

Wang Shu

Architect, Educator and 2012 Pritzker Laureate
Hangzhou, China

Martha Thorne (Executive Director)

Dean, IE School of Architecture & Design
Madrid, Spain

Biography

Yvonne Farrell (1951) and Shelley McNamara (1952) met during their collegiate studies at the School of Architecture at University College Dublin (UCD). They studied under rationalist architects who had newly arrived to challenge the preexisting thought and culture of the institution. Upon graduating in 1976, they were each offered the unique opportunity to teach at UCD, where they continued to educate until 2006, and were appointed as adjunct professors in 2015. “Teaching for us has always been a parallel reality,” comments Farrell. “And it’s a way of trying to distill our experience and gift it to other generations coming along so that they actually play a role in the growing of that culture. So it’s a two way thing, we learn from students and hopefully students learn from us.”

In 1978, Farrell and McNamara, along with three others, established Grafton Architects, named after the street of their original office to prioritize the existence of place, rather than individuals. Significant projects have included North King Street Housing (Dublin, Ireland 2000); Urban Institute of Ireland, University College Dublin (Dublin, Ireland 2002); Solstice Arts Centre (Navan, Ireland 2007); Loreto Community School (Milford, Ireland 2006); Offices for the Department of Finance (Dublin, Ireland 2009); and Medical School, University of Limerick (Limerick, Ireland 2012).

Reflecting on their childhoods, McNamara recalls, “My awakening to the experience of architecture was a visit as a child to an enormous 18th-century house on the beautiful main street of the city of Limerick where my aunt lived. Her husband had a beautiful mahogany lined pharmacy shop on the ground floor, and she ran a little Montessori school in a room over the entrance hall. This aroused a sense of wonder as to what a house could be and I remember vividly the sensation of space and light, which was an absolute revelation to me.”

Farrell shares, “One of my earliest memories is of lying on my back on a cushion on the floor underneath the baby grand piano we had at home. While my mother played the piano above me, I remember being aware of the wonderful space filled with music under that walnut instrument. I grew up in Tullamore, Co. Offaly, Ireland—a town of streets and squares, stone warehouses, crafted houses and a canal that cut a wonderful line into the landscape. An oak forest at the edge of the town had a carpet of bluebells every spring. Nature felt very close.”

Of the five original partners, only Farrell and McNamara stayed. Their first international commission away from their native Ireland transpired 25 years later, with Università Luigi Bocconi in Milan (Milan, Italy 2008), which was awarded World Building of the Year at the 2008 inaugural World Architectural Festival in Barcelona. Other international projects have since followed, with tantamount acclamation from the architectural community. University Campus UTEC Lima (Lima, Peru 2015) was awarded the inaugural RIBA International Prize 2016 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Institut Mines Télécom (Paris, France 2019) and Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, School of Economics (Toulouse, France 2019) were recently completed.

They are Fellows of The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland and International Honorary Fellows of RIBA. They have previously held the Kenzo Tange chair at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (2010) and the Louis Kahn chair at Yale University (2011) and have taught at institutions including École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne and Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, and lectured internationally.

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Biography (continued)

Grafton Architects was the recipient of the 2012 Biennale di Venezia Silver Lion Award for the exhibition, *Architecture as New Geography*. Farrell and McNamara were appointed as 2018 co-curators for the 16th International Architecture Exhibition, la Biennale di Venezia, with the theme *FREESPACE*. They were awarded the RIAI James Gandon Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Architecture by the RIAI in 2019 and the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 2020.

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Fact Summary

BUILT WORKS

- 2019** Town House Building, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom
Institut Mines Télécom, Paris, Saclay, France
Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, Toulouse, France
- 2015** University Campus UTEC Lima, Lima, Peru
- 2012** Medical School, Student Housing, Piazza and Pergola, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
- 2011** President's House, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
- 2009** Offices for the Department of Finance, Dublin, Ireland
- 2008** Università Luigi Bocconi, Milan, Italy
Drogheda Fire and Rescue Services Station, Drogheda, Ireland
- 2007** Solstice Arts Centre, Navan, Ireland
- 2006** Extension to School of Mechanical Engineering (Phases II and III), Dublin, Ireland
Loreto Community School, Milford, Ireland
- 2003** Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe, Galway, Ireland
North Kildare Educate Together School, Celbridge, Ireland
Coláiste Eoin agus Íosagáin, Dublin, Ireland
- 2002** Urban Institute of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland
- 2001** Office Infill, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland
Civic Offices Public Building and Public Space, Dunshaughlin, Ireland
- 2000** North King Street Housing, Dublin, Ireland
- 1999** Denzille Lane Cinema, Dublin, Ireland
- 1998** Office Building, Little Strand Street, Dublin, Ireland
Motorway Bridges, Ireland

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Fact Summary (continued)

BUILT WORKS

- 1996** The Department of Mechanical Engineering (Phase I), Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland
- 1992-99** Oughterard, Castleblayney and Celbridge Schools, Department of Education Ireland, Oughterard, Castleblayney, Celbridge, Ireland
- 1996** Temple Bar Square, Public Space and Mixed Use Building, Dublin, Ireland

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 2000** Landscape and Infrastructure Project, Dublin, Ireland

HOUSING SCHEMES

- 2000** South Earl Street Housing, Dublin, Ireland
- 2005** Dalkey, Social Housing, Dublin, Ireland
- 2011** Ashford Social Housing, Dublin, Ireland

PRIVATE HOUSES

- 1992** Boland & Kane Mews Houses, Dublin, Ireland
- 1995** Gray & O'Connell House, Doolin, Ireland
- 1998** Gill House, Westport, Ireland
- Mara House, Kinvara, Ireland
- Dix House, Howth, Ireland
- 1999** Hall House, Dublin, Ireland
- 2001** Hanlon House, Dublin, Ireland
- 2008** Philibin Bowman Extension, Dublin, Ireland
- Greenfield House Extension, Dublin, Ireland
- Mews Houses, Dublin, Ireland

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Fact Summary (continued)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Marshall Building, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom

Parnell Square Cultural Quarter, City Library, Dublin, Ireland

Head Offices for Electricity Supply Board, Dublin, Ireland

Vicar St Hotel, Dublin, Ireland

Oxford Street Department Store, London, United Kingdom

Patrick Street Department Store, Cork, Ireland

Boosterstown Recreational Building, Interpretive Centre and Coastal Meadow, Dublin, Ireland

Dublin 7 Educate Together School, Dublin, Ireland

Whiskey Distillery, Kerry, Ireland

EXHIBITIONS

2018 *Freespace* (Curators), Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy

2016 *The Physics of Culture*, Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy

Beazley Designs of the Year, Design Museum, London, United Kingdom

Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Fine Arts, London, United Kingdom

2014 *Memory, 300 years of Catalan Spirit Commemoration*, Barcelona, Spain

Sensing Spaces, The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, London, United Kingdom

2012 *Architecture as New Geography* (Silver Lion Award), Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy

Primary Schools for the Future, Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland

A Stone Pavilion, Pavilion for Pibamarmi, Verona, Italy

2011 *The Architecture You Like© | L'architettura che piace©*, MAXXI, Rome, Italy

2010 *Grafton Architects*, London Metropolitan University of Architecture, London, United Kingdom

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Fact Summary (continued)

EXHIBITIONS

- 2010** *Building for Brussels Exhibition*, Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium
Grafton Architects' Sketchbooks, Secret Laboratory at PLACE, Belfast, United Kingdom
- 2009** *Universita Luigi Bocconi, The Five Finalists in the 2009 European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture*, Mies van der Rohe Award, Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy
- 2008** *The Lives of Spaces, Irish National Exhibition*, Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy
- 2007** *Line to Surface: Urban Void, Extended City*, International Triennial of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2006** *Laboratorioitalia*, Ex casa di Correzione del San Michele, Rome, Italy
Grafton Architects, Dessa Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- 2003** *Mies van der Rohe Award Exhibition 2003*, Royal Institute of British Architects, London, United Kingdom
- 2002** *Universita Luigi Bocconi Project*, Urban Centre, Milan, Italy
Italian Pavilion Exhibition NEXT, Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy
- 1999** *Grafton Architects*, Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland

AWARDS

- 2020** Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal Gold Medal
- 2019** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, James Gandon Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Architecture
- 2018** RIAI Institute of Architects of Ireland, Gold Medal for Architecture, Universita Luigi Bocconi
Ulysses Medal, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland
Blueprint Awards, Blueprint Award for Critical Thinking
- 2017** University of Virginia and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello, Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Architecture

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Fact Summary (continued)

AWARDS

- 2017** Irish Concrete Society, Enterprise Ireland International Award, Highly Commended, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- KPMG Irish Independent Property Industry Excellence Awards, Outstanding Contribution to The Property Industry Award and Overall Winner Award
- 2016** Royal Institute of British Architects, Inaugural RIBA International Prize 2016, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Best International Building & Best Education Building, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- Architectural Association of Ireland, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize, Finalist, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- Irish Design Institute Design Awards, President's Choice Award for Outstanding Achievement in Design in Ireland
- Beazley Designs of the Year, Design Museum Awards, Finalist, Campus for UTEC University of Engineering and Technology
- 2015** University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Foundation Day Medal
- Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Assessors Award, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola
- Architect's Journal, Jane Drew Prize for Architecture
- European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture: Mies van der Rohe Award, Shortlisted Finalist, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola
- Architectural Association of Ireland, Special Mention, Installation for the 'Sensing Spaces' Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, United Kingdom
- 2014** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Award, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola
- 2013** Royal Institute of British Architects, RIBA European Award, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola
- Royal Institute of British Architects, Stirling Prize Nomination, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola

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Fact Summary (continued)

AWARDS

- 2012** 12th International Venice Biennale, Silver Lion, *'Architecture as New Geography'* Exhibition
- Architectural Association of Ireland, Award, University of Limerick Medical School, Student Residences, Piazza and Pergola
- Marmomacc Stone Fair 2012, Best Communicator, A Stone Pavilion
- 2010** Architectural Association of Ireland, Special Mention, President's House, University of Limerick
- 2009** Architectural Association of Ireland, Downes Medal, Università Luigi Bocconi
- The Civic Trust Awards, Award, Offices for the Department of Finance
- Architectural Association of Ireland, Special Award, Department of Finance
- Mies van der Rohe Awards, Finalist, Università Luigi Bocconi
- 2008** World Architecture Festival 2008, World Building of the Year Award, Università Luigi Bocconi
- World Architecture Festival 2008, Learning Category Award, Università Luigi Bocconi
- Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland Award, Award, Department of Finance
- OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Highly Commended, Drogheda Fire and Rescue Service
- OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Highly Commended, Offices for the Department of Finance
- 2007** Architectural Association of Ireland, Award, Solstice Arts Centre
- OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Award, Loreto Community School
- 2006** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland Awards, Award, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Trinity College Dublin
- Architectural Association of Ireland, Award, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Trinity College Dublin
- 2004** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland Awards, Award, Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe and North Kildare Educate Together School
- Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland Awards, Award, Coláiste Eoin + Coláiste Íosagáin School

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Fact Summary (continued)

AWARDS

- 2004** OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Award, Ardscoil Mhuire School
- OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Special Mention, North Kildare Educate Together School
- OPUS Architecture and Construction Awards, Special Mention, Coláiste Eoin + Coláiste Íosagáin School
- 2003** Architectural Association of Ireland, Downes Medal, Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe and North Kildare Educate Together School
- Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Exhibited, Dublin City University
- The Irish Joinery RIAI Awards, Best Public Building, Dunshaughlin Civic Offices
- European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture: Mies van der Rohe Award, Shortlisted, Dunshaughlin Civic Offices

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Fact Summary (continued)

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Previous Laureates

Arata Isozaki, 2019 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Château de Versailles, Versailles, France

Balkrishna Doshi, 2018 Laureate

India

Presented at the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Canada

Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem and Ramon Vilalta, 2017 Laureates

Spain

Presented at the State Guest House, Akasaka Palace, Tokyo, Japan

Alejandro Aravena, 2016 Laureate

Chile

Presented at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York

Frei Otto, 2015 Laureate

Germany

Presented at the New World Center, Miami Beach, Florida

Shigeru Ban, 2014 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Toyo Ito, 2013 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts

Wang Shu, 2012 Laureate

The People's Republic of China

Presented at the Great Hall of the People, Beijing, The People's Republic of China

Eduardo Souto de Moura, 2011 Laureate

Portugal

Presented at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, Washington, DC

Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, 2010 Laureates

Japan

Presented at the Immigration Museum, Ellis Island, New York Bay

Peter Zumthor, 2009 Laureate

Switzerland

Presented at the Palace of the Buenos Aires City Legislature, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Jean Nouvel, 2008 Laureate

France

Presented at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Richard Rogers, 2007 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, London, United Kingdom

Paulo Mendes da Rocha, 2006 Laureate

Brazil

Presented at the Dolmabahçe Palace, Istanbul, Turkey

Thom Mayne, 2005 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, Millennium Park, Chicago, Illinois

Zaha Hadid, 2004 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

Jørn Utzon, 2003 Laureate

Denmark

Presented at Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid, Spain

Glenn Murcutt, 2002 Laureate

Australia

Presented at Michelangelo's Campidoglio in Rome, Italy

Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, 2001 Laureates

Switzerland

Presented at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia

Rem Koolhaas, 2000 Laureate

Netherlands

Presented at the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, Israel

Norman Foster, 1999 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the Altes Museum, Berlin, Germany

Renzo Piano, 1998 Laureate

Italy

Presented at the White House, Washington, DC

Sverre Fehn, 1997 Laureate

Norway

Presented at the construction site of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

Rafael Moneo, 1996 Laureate

Spain

Presented at the construction site of the Getty Center, Los Angeles, California

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Tadao Ando, 1995 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Grand Trianon and the Palace of Versailles, France

Christian de Portzamparc, 1994 Laureate

France

Presented at The Commons, Columbus, Indiana

Fumihiko Maki, 1993 Laureate

Japan

Presented at Prague Castle, Czech Republic

Alvaro Siza, 1992 Laureate

Portugal

Presented at the Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago, Illinois

Robert Venturi, 1991 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Palacio de Iturbide, Mexico City, Mexico

Aldo Rossi, 1990 Laureate

Italy

Presented at Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy

Frank O. Gehry, 1989 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Todai-ji Buddhist Temple, Nara, Japan

Oscar Niemeyer, 1988 Laureate

Brazil

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Gordon Bunshaft, 1988 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Kenzo Tange, 1987 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Gottfried Böhm, 1986 Laureate

Germany

Presented at Goldsmiths' Hall, London, United Kingdom

Hans Hollein, 1985 Laureate

Austria

Presented at the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Richard Meier, 1984 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

leoh Ming Pei, 1983 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York

Kevin Roche, 1982 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

James Stirling, 1981 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the National Building Museum, Washington, DC

Luis Barragán, 1980 Laureate

Mexico

Presented at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC

Philip Johnson, 1979 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC

About the Medal



The bronze medallion awarded to each Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize is based on designs of Louis Sullivan, famed Chicago architect generally acknowledged as the father of the skyscraper. On one side is the name of the prize. On the reverse, three words are inscribed, "firmness, commodity and delight." These are the three conditions referred to by Henry Wotton in his 1624 treatise, *The Elements of Architecture*, which was a translation of thoughts originally set down nearly 2,000 years ago by Marcus Vitruvius in his *Ten Books on Architecture*, dedicated to the Roman Emperor Augustus. Wotton, who did the translation when he was England's first ambassador to Venice, used the complete quote as: "The end is to build well. Well-building hath three conditions: commodity, firmness and delight."

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History of the Prize

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was established by The Hyatt Foundation in 1979 to annually honor a living architect whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture. It has often been described as “architecture’s most prestigious award” or as “the Nobel of architecture.”

The prize takes its name from the Pritzker family, whose international business interests, which include the Hyatt Hotels, are headquartered in Chicago. They have long been known for their support of educational, social welfare, scientific, medical and cultural activities. Jay A. Pritzker, who founded the prize with his wife, Cindy, died on January 23, 1999. His eldest son, Thomas J. Pritzker, has become chairman of The Hyatt Foundation. In 2004, Chicago celebrated the opening of Millennium Park, in which a music pavilion designed by Pritzker Laureate Frank Gehry was dedicated and named for the founder of the prize. It was in the Jay Pritzker Pavilion that the 2005 awarding ceremony took place.

Tom Pritzker explains, “As native Chicagoans, it’s not surprising that we are keenly aware of architecture, living in the birthplace of the skyscraper, a city filled with buildings designed by architectural legends such as Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe and many others.”

He continues, “In 1967, our company acquired an unfinished building which was to become the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Its soaring atrium was wildly successful and became the signature piece of our hotels around the world. It was immediately apparent that this design had a pronounced effect on the mood of our guests and attitude of our employees. While the architecture of Chicago made us cognizant of the art of architecture, our work with designing and building hotels made us aware of the impact architecture could have on human behavior.”

And he elaborates further, “So in 1978, when the family was approached with the idea of honoring living architects, we were responsive. Mom and Dad (Cindy and the late Jay A. Pritzker) believed that a meaningful prize would encourage and stimulate not only a greater public awareness of buildings, but also would inspire greater creativity within the architectural profession.” He went on to add that he is extremely proud to carry on that effort on behalf of his family.

Many of the procedures and rewards of the Pritzker Prize are modeled after the Nobel Prize. Laureates of the Pritzker Architecture Prize receive a \$100,000 grant, a formal citation certificate, and since 1987, a bronze medal. Prior to that year, a limited edition Henry Moore sculpture was presented to each Laureate.

Nominations are accepted from all nations; from government officials, writers, critics, academicians, fellow architects, architectural societies or industrialists, virtually anyone who might have an interest in advancing great architecture. The prize is awarded irrespective of nationality, race, creed, gender or ideology.

The nominating procedure is continuous from year to year, closing each November. Nominations received after the closing are automatically considered in the following calendar year. The final selection is made by an international jury through undisclosed deliberations and voting.

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The Evolution of the Jury

The first jury, assembled in 1979, consisted of the late J. Carter Brown, then director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; the late J. Irwin Miller, then chairman of the executive and finance committees of Cummins Engine Company; César Pelli, architect and at the time, dean of the Yale University School of Architecture; Arata Isozaki, architect from Japan and 2019 Pritzker Prize Laureate; and the late Kenneth Clark (Lord Clark of Saltwood), noted English author and art historian.

Jury members are invited to serve for a minimum three-year tenure. The gradual changes over time in the jury composition allow for a balance between stability and new perspectives on the committee. Lord Rothschild of the UK was Chair of the Pritzker Prize Jury from 2002–2004. Lord Palumbo, well-known architectural patron and former chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, former trustee of the Mies van der Rohe Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and former chairman of the trustees, Serpentine Galleries, served as Chair from 2005–2016 and continued as a member through 2018. Glenn Murcutt, 2002 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect, joined the Jury in 2011 and held the position as Chair from 2017–2018.

Jury members are assembled from around the world and reflect a variety of professions and points of view. The current Jury Chair is Justice Stephen Breyer, U.S. Supreme Court, who joined the Jury as a member in 2012.

Other members include André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, architectural critic, curator and Brazilian Ambassador to India; Barry Bergdoll, Meyer Schapiro Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University; Deborah Berke, architect, educator and dean of the Yale School of Architecture; Sejima Kazuyo, 2010 Pritzker Prize Laureate and Japanese architect; Benedetta Tagliabue, architect and educator from Italy who has her practice, EMBT, in Barcelona, Spain; and Wang Shu, 2012 Pritzker Prize Laureate, Chinese architect and educator.

The Jury always seeks multiple points of view and independence. Others who have served include people from the world of business such as the late Thomas J. Watson, Jr., former chairman of IBM; the late Giovanni Agnelli, former chairman of Fiat; Rolf Fehlbaum, then chairman of Vitra, Basel, Switzerland; and Ratan N. Tata, Chairman of Tata Trusts, Mumbai, India.

Critics, journalists and curators include the late Toshio Nakamura, former editor of A+U in Japan; the late Ada Louise Huxtable, author and architecture critic and the longest serving juror to date; Victoria Newhouse, architectural historian and author; Karen Stein, writer, editor and architectural consultant in New York; and Kristin Feireiss, architecture curator, writer and editor based in Berlin, Germany.

Numerous architects from around the world have served including Americans Frank Gehry, the late Philip Johnson and the late Kevin Roche; as well as the late Ricardo Legorreta of Mexico, Fumihiko Maki of Japan and the late Charles Correa of India; Jorge Silvetti, architect and professor of architecture at Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts; and Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, 2018 Pritzker Prize Laureate, architect and professor of architecture from Ahmedabad, India. Since 2000, there have been many outstanding architects associated with the Pritzker Prize Jury including Juhani Pallasmaa, architect, professor and author, Helsinki, Finland; Shigeru Ban, 2014 Pritzker Prize Laureate, architect and professor at Keio University, Tokyo, Japan; Alejandro Aravena, 2016 Pritzker Prize Laureate, architect and executive director of Elemental, Santiago, Chile; Carlos Jimenez, a principal of Carlos Jimenez and professor at the Rice University School of Architecture in Houston,

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The Evolution of the Jury (continued)

Texas; the late Zaha Hadid, 2004 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect; Renzo Piano, 1998 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect, of Paris, France and Genoa, Italy; Richard Rogers, 2007 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect, London, United Kingdom; and Yung Ho Chang, architect and educator of Beijing, The People's Republic of China.

Martha Thorne became the executive director of the Pritzker Prize in 2005. Currently, she is Dean of IE School of Architecture and Design, Madrid/Segovia, Spain, part of an innovative private university. Prior to joining IE and academia, she was associate curator of architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago for ten years. Author of numerous books and articles on contemporary architecture, she also served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Graham Foundation and the Board of the International Archive of Women in Architecture. Currently she assists with competitions and architect selection processes.

Executive Director from 1998 to 2005 was Bill Lacy, architect and advisor to the J. Paul Getty Trust and many other foundations, as well as president of the State University of New York at Purchase. Previous secretaries to the jury were the late Brendan Gill, who was architecture critic of The New Yorker magazine; and the late Carleton Smith. The late Arthur Drexler, who was the director of the department of architecture and design at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City, was a consultant to the jury for many years.

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Pritzker Ceremonies Through the Years

Soon after establishing the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1979, the Pritzker family began a tradition of moving the award ceremonies to architecturally and historically significant venues throughout the world. Befitting a truly international prize, the ceremony has been held in fifteen countries on four continents spanning from North and South America to Europe to the Middle East to Far East Asia.

For the first two years of the Prize, the ceremony was held at historic Dumbarton Oaks in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, DC where the first Laureate, Philip Johnson, designed a major addition to the estate. Indeed, for six of its first seven years, the prize was awarded in the District of Columbia. Its fourth year, the ceremony traveled for the first time—to the Art Institute of Chicago—but it wasn't until 1986 that the Pritzker Prize was awarded internationally.

Since then, the Pritzker Prize ceremony has been held at international venues as often as it has in the United States. Europe has hosted the ceremony twelve times in eight countries, twice each in the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy and France. The Pritzker ceremony has visited some of the Old World's most beautiful and historic locales, old and new, from the 9th century Prague Castle in the Czech Republic; to Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum, opened in 1997; and the 2013 reopened Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

Beyond Europe and the U.S., the Prize has traveled twice to the Middle East and Latin America, and thrice to East Asia. In 2012, the Prize ceremony was held for the first time in China. Coincidentally, Chinese architect Wang Shu was the Laureate and received the award in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. Shu was not the first architect to be so honored in his home country, but as ceremony locations are usually chosen each year long before the laureate is selected, there is no direct relationship between the honoree and the ceremony venue. In 1989, Frank Gehry was awarded the Prize at Todai-ji in Nara, Japan. This 8th century Buddhist temple is one of three UNESCO World Heritage sites to host the ceremony, along with Monticello in Virginia and the Palace of Versailles in France.

As architecture is as much art as design, the Pritzker Prize ceremony has been held in numerous museums, especially in the United States. New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fort Worth's Kimball Museum and Washington DC's National Gallery of Art have hosted the Pritzker. Libraries too, have been a popular venue choice, including 2013's site, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Other examples include the Harold Washington Library in Chicago, the Library of Congress and the Huntington Library, Arts Collections and Botanical Gardens near Los Angeles. The other ceremony held in Los Angeles took place at the Getty Center in 1996, which was designed by 1984 Pritzker Laureate Richard Meier. At the time, the museum was only partially completed.

The Prize ceremony often visits newly opened or unfinished buildings. In 2005, the ceremony was held at the new Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Chicago's Millennium Park, which was designed by 1989 Laureate Frank Gehry. It was the second Gehry-designed building that hosted the ceremony, the first being the Guggenheim Museum in Spain. Other historically-important venues for the Pritzker include the Jerusalem Archaeological Park. With the ceremony at the foot of the Temple Mount, it was the Pritzker's oldest venue. The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, comprised of palaces of the Russian czars, hosted the 2004 ceremony that honored the first female winner of the Award, Zaha Hadid. For the Pritzker Prize's first visit to Latin America in 1991, the ceremony was held at the Palace of Iturbide in Mexico City where the first Emperor of Mexico was crowned. In 2018, the ceremony was held in Toronto for the first time, at the Aga Kahn Museum, designed by 1993 Laureate Fumihiko Maki.

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Pritzker Ceremonies Through the Years (continued)

Modern-day heads of state have been among the many dignitaries to attend Pritzker ceremonies. U.S. Presidents Clinton and Obama attended ceremonies in Washington in 1998 and 2011 respectively. The former ceremony was held at the White House. The King of Spain attended the 2003 ceremony at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando in Madrid. The Prime Minister of Turkey and the President of Czech Republic also each attended ceremonies when held in their respective countries. Their Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan, attended the 2017 ceremony at the Akasaka Palace, Tokyo, which was originally built as the residence for the Crown Prince in 1909.

Like the architects it honors, the Pritzker Prize has often bucked convention, holding its ceremonies in unique spaces. In 1994, when French architect Christian de Portzamparc received the Prize, the community of Columbus, Indiana was honored because of the support of then-Pritzker juror J. Irwin Miller; numerous notable architects designed buildings in the small Midwest city. In 2010, the ceremony was held in the middle of New York Harbor at Ellis Island's Immigration Museum. Eight years before, the ceremony took place on one of the seven traditional hills of Rome in Michelangelo's monumental Piazza di Campidoglio.

The location of the 42nd Pritzker Prize ceremony, honoring 2020 Laureates Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, will be announced in the upcoming weeks.

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